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Spice & Wolf

Vol. 8

PARENTAL ADVISORY
WARNING
EXPLICIT CONTENT

SPICE & WOLF

Lawrence
A merchant traveling with Holo. Collecting information about Holo's homeland.

Holo
Lawrence's traveling companion, a beautiful girl. Her true form is that of the wolf-god of the harvest.

Elsa
The church deaconess of the village of Tereo, successor to the late Father Franz.

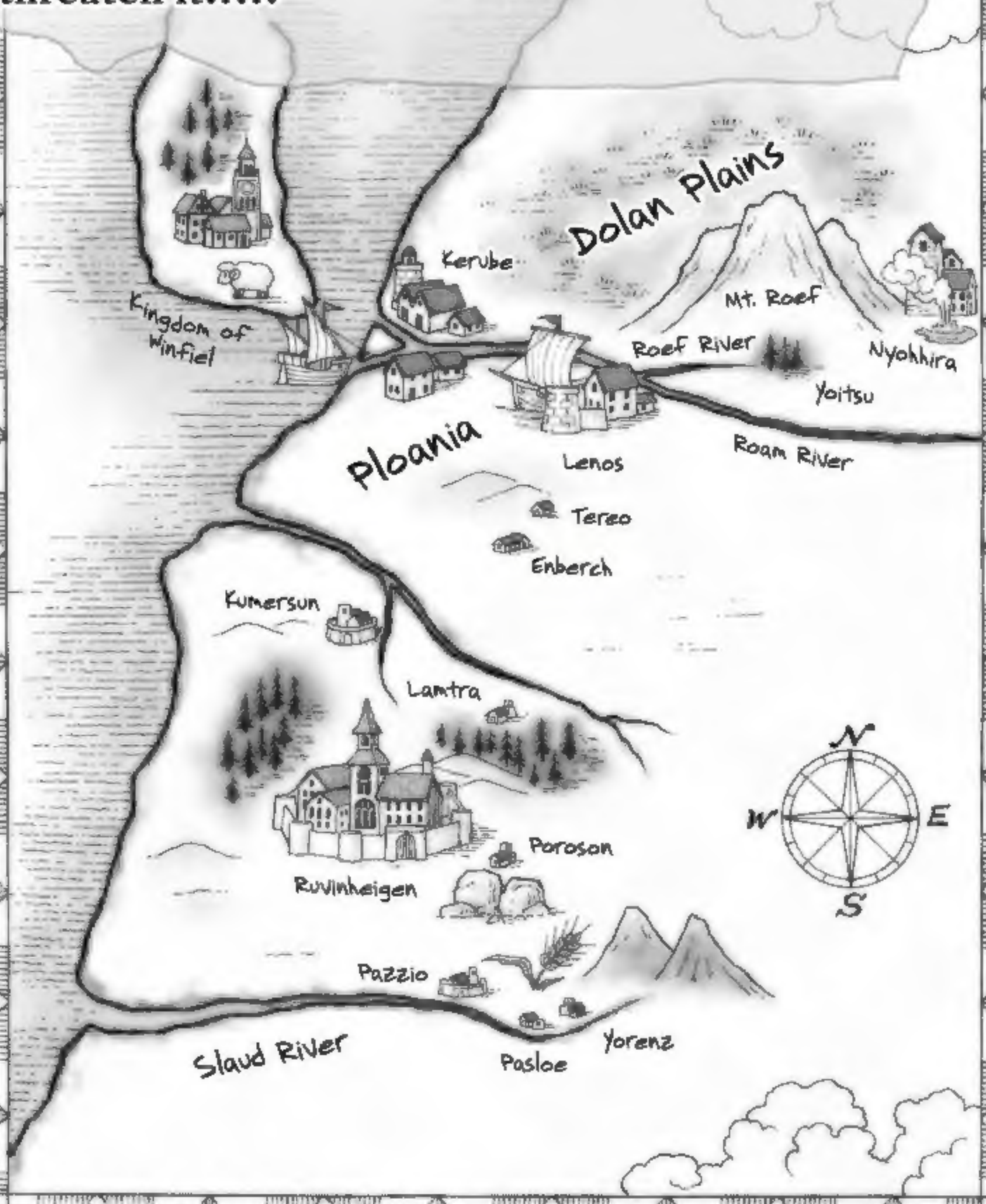
Evan
A young miller. Romantically involved with Elsa.

Bishop Van
The bishop of St. Rio's Church in the town of Enberch. Conspiring with the town to control Tereo.

Col
A boy saved by Lawrence at the river checkpoint. A naive but clever lad.

Introduction

Caught in the schemes of Bishop Van, the town of Tereo finds both its faith and its autonomy threatened. Made a scapegoat via the plotting, Lawrence proposes escape to Elsa and Evan. Elsa first chooses to flee but soon returns to fight for her place in her hometown. Will Lawrence be able to rescue the town from the forces that threaten it...!?



Map Illustration: Hidetada Idemitsu

SPICE & WOLF

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SPICE & WOLF

ゴクン
GOKON
(CLUNK)

ZUZUZU
(KRRRRRRK)
ズ
ズ
ズ
...

IT'S ALL RIGHT. THERE'S NO ONE HERE.

GACHA (KACHIK)

THIS SHOULD WORK NICELY.

...MR. LAWRENCE.

SEEMS THE NEGOTIATIONS HAVE BEGUN IN THE SQUARE.

HOLY RELICS ARE MORE PERSUASIVE IF THEY'RE A BIT SHABBY.

ABOUT THIS "MIRACLE"... CAN IT REALLY BE ACCOM-PLISHED AS PLANNED?

STILL, THE DISPLAY EARLIER ASIDE, IT HAS BEEN SOME TIME SINCE LAST I TRIED THIS.

'TIS A BIT FAR BETWEEN THE CARRIAGE AND THE CROWD, BUT, AYE, 'TWILL BE WELL.

EVAN... WILL YOU BE ALL RIGHT?

DOKI (BADUM) ドキ

DOKI ドキ

DOKI ドキ

IF I SHOULD EAT THE POISONED WHEAT, YOU HAVE BUT TO KILL ME BEFORE I DIE OF IT.

I'LL SWALLOW YOU IN A SINGLE BITE. IT WON'T HURT A BIT!

NIYA

NIYA (GRIN)

SO ABOUT THE TIMING OF OUR APPEAR-ANCE...

GAYA

GAYA (CHATTER)

GAYA

GYUMU (SHOVE)

ONCE THE MIRACLE'S DONE, LEAVE THE MONEY TALK TO ME.

...ALWAYS YIELDS THE GREATEST PROFIT.

NO MATTER THE GOODS, BUYING THEM WHEN THEY'RE CHEAPEST...

SO WHEN THE VILLAGE IS TRULY CORNERED, THEN...

.....

MY GOD, THE GOD WHO CREATED ALL.

YOUR POWER IS UNDOUBTEDLY BEYOND THAT OF ANY HUMAN.

BUT I STILL BELIEVE IN MY GOD.

MISS HOLO, THERE IS ONE THING I MUST SAY.

AND YOU ARE NO GOD.

OF COURSE I'M NOT!

ZAWA

ZAWA

ZAWA (MURMUR)

ZAWA

...I HAVE COME SEEKING REPARATION FOR THE DAMAGES CAUSED.

UNDER THE TERMS OF THE WHEAT-SELLING ARRANGEMENT ESTABLISHED BY THE LATE FATHER FRANZ...

ACCORDING TO THE AGREEMENT, "THE CHURCH OF TEREO WILL BE LIABLE AND RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL SUCH REPARATION," BUT...

OUR COMPANY HAS SUFFERED GREAT DAMAGES BECAUSE OF TEREO'S WHEAT.

OUR COMPANY THUS SEEKS THE OPINION OF THE ENBERCH CHURCH.

...THE CHURCH HAS LOST ITS MASTER.

EVEN IF SHE RETURNS, SHE CAN HARDLY BE CALLED THE CHURCH'S MASTER.

NO...WE HAVE OUR DEACONESS... THOUGH SHE IS OUT AT THE MOMENT.

GAKU (SLUMP)

I DON'T BELIEVE SHE HAS THOSE QUALIFICATIONS.

ZAWA

ZAWA

ZAWA

BURN THIS.

...OUR CHURCH CAN YET COME TO YOUR AID.

IF YOU ACCEPT THE TEACHINGS OF RIGHTEOUSNESS...

GOTO (THUNK)

ELSA!?

!

OOH ...

WILL WE YET BE SAVED?

DID SHE SAY ELSA?

HISO

HISO (PSST)

AND THE LAD'S WITH HER...

BOSO (MUMBLE)

THE PROTECTION OF GOD BE UPON YOU.

ZAWA... MURMUR.

ZAWA

...FEW MERCHANTS ARE EVEN SO GREEDY AS THIS.

ZAWA

HUMANS— ALWAYS DEPENDING ON OTHERS IN TIMES OF NEED.

STILL, I HAVE DEPENDED ON HUMANS IN MY TIME TOO.

ZAWA
. . .

ZAWA
(MURMUR)
. . .

WAS THE WEIGHT OF YOUR SIN TOO MUCH FOR YOUR CONSCIENCE TO BEAR?

I WAS LED TO BELIEVE THAT YOU HAD STOLEN AWAY IN THE NIGHT.

ELSA, WHY?

I'M SORRY, MRS. IIMA.

GOD IS ALWAYS FORGIVING.

.....

HMPH.

WE HAVE COME TO REESTABLISH THE CHURCH OF THE TRUE FAITH IN THIS VILLAGE.

AS FOR THE FALSE SERVANT OF GOD, WHO WEARS THE SKIN OF A LAMB BUT UNDERNEATH IS A LYING SERPENT...

...SHE SHALL FACE THE JUDGMENT OF THE MOST HIGH GOD.

GASHA (CLANG)

GU (GRAB)

THAT WILL NOT BE NECES-SARY.

ZAWA (MURMUR)

I HAVE MET ONE OF HIS DIVINE MESSEN-GERS!

HA (GASP)

IT IS TRUE THAT MY FAITH HAS, AT TIMES, BEEN MIS-PLACED.

BUT ALMIGHTY GOD HAS SHOWN ME THE TRUE PATH.

THAT YOU WOULD CLAIM TO HAVE ENCOUNTERED A DIVINE MESSENGER IS PROOF OF YOUR HERESY!

BLASPHEMY!

IF I AM WRONG, THEN BRING THE EVIDENCE BEFORE ME AT ONCE!

GASHA (CLANK)

HMPH.

LET THEM THROUGH.

GASHI (CLUTCH)

WE'RE GOING TO SHOW YOU THAT EVIDENCE!

WORSHIP OF TRUYEO THE SERPENT GOD IS INDEED A MISTAKE.

SUU (INHALE)

JARI (SCRAPE)

HOWEVER, THAT MISTAKE IS NOT ITSELF A FUNDAMENTAL ONE.

WHAT ...!?

IT IS MY BELIEF THAT TRUYEO ITSELF IS ONE OF GOD'S MIRACLES.

CAN YOU PROVE THAT YOUR WORDS WERE NOT WHISPERED INTO YOUR EARS BY A DEMON?

THE WORDS OF MEN DO NOT KEEP CLOSE COMPANY WITH THE TRUTH.

THE DIVINE MESSENGER HAS PROMISED TO REVEAL A SIGN THAT WILL GUIDE THE WAYWARD LAMBS BACK TO THE TRUE PATH.

WAAA (CLAMOR)

HMPH, YOU WOULD PRESUME TO DISPLAY THE POWER OF GOD...

NOW, FINALLY...

GOKU (NOD)

WAA

ZAWA (CHATTER)

ZAWA

PU

PU (POP)

PU

GOD HAS CREATED A MIRACLE!

...OHH!

IT'S GOD!

THE WHEAT, IT'S —!

!?

?

EVEN MIXING IT AMONG GOOD WHEAT, IT SEEMED ALL THEY COULD MANAGE WAS POISONING A SINGLE WAGONLOAD'S WORTH.

KASA (RUSTLE)

...

.....

ACQUIRING RIDELIUS'S HELLFIRE WAS VERY DIFFICULT. NO MATTER THE REGION, ALL WHO SAW THE WITHERED WHEAT KNEW EXACTLY WHAT IT MEANT.

SO THAT'S WHERE THE POISONED WHEAT IS.

GOD HAS SHOWN US THE CORRECT PATH.

IMPOSSIBLE... HOW COULD SHE...!?

はぁ HFF!

はぁ HFF!

はぁ HFF!

I WOULD LIKE YOU TO CONFIRM THAT THIS IS NOT THE WORK OF A DEMON.

BISHOP VAN.

PLEASE BLESS THIS CHALICE.

ONCE YOU HAVE DONE SO, EVAN THE MILLER WILL PROVE THE TRUTH OF GOD'S TEACH-ING.

SU (SWF)

H-HOW ...?

HENA (WEAKLY)

BRING WATER.

.....

*A MEMBER OF THE CLERGY CAN BLESS AN ITEM IN THE NAME OF GOD, THUS SPECIFYING IT AS HOLY AND PURE

NOW TAKE THE WATER...

...TO THE MILLER THERE.

CHAPU (SLOSH)

WHAT DOES THIS ACCOM-PLISH ...?

SAKU (SLIT)

SARASARA (FSSSHHH)

WATCH CLOSELY.

SARA

SARA

SARA

SAKU

KASA

KASA (RUSTLE)

CHAPU

NOW IT CONTAINS WHEAT COLLECTED FROM ALL BUT ONE OF THE WAGONS.

GUI (GULP)

PWAH!

WAAAAA (CHEER)

TTTT

WAAA

BISHOP VAN.

...THEN SURELY YOU WILL BE ABLE TO DEMONSTRATE A TRUE ONE.

IF THIS IS A FALSE MIRACLE...

ZAKU (CUT)

SARA

SARA (FSSH)

V-VERY WELL...!

THIS IS A MIRACLE. A TRUE MIRACLE.

BISHOP VAN.

AND THE CHURCH OF THIS VILLAGE ...?

GUH...

I'LL ASK YOU TO PUT THAT IN WRITING.

IT IS LEGITI-MATE.

LEGITIMATE... CHURCH.

GUSU (SNIFF)

GAKU (SLUMP)

WAAAAA (HOOORAY)

GYU (HUG)

GURUN (TWIRL)

WAA

TIME FOR YOU TO PLAY YOUR PART, EH?

WAA

NOW, THEN.

SPICE & WOLF

AS THE INCIDENT CAME TO A CLOSE, THE QUESTION REMAINED OF WHAT WOULD BE DONE WITH THE RETURNED WHEAT.

THE RIENDOTT COMPANY HAD PAID TWO HUNDRED LIMAR FOR THE WHEAT.

BUT IT WAS SETTLED THAT ONLY ONE HUNDRED SIXTY LIMAR WOULD BE RETURNED.

I HAVE A PROPOSAL FOR YOU.

SO EVEN COMBINING ALL THEIR FUNDS, ONE HUNDRED SIXTY LIMAR WAS A DIFFICULT SUM TO ACHIEVE.

BUT THE VILLAGE HAD LITTLE TENDENCY TO SAVE MONEY.

BUT BISHOP VAN, MR. RIENDOTT...

...IT WILL REQUIRE YOUR COOPERATION.

WAA (ROAR)

!?

HOW DARE YOU!

YER SUP-POSED TO PRO-TECT THAT!!

...THE DISSOLUTION OF YOUR REQUIREMENT TO PURCHASE TEREO'S WHEAT, CONDUCTING ITS PURCHASE UNDER THE SAME CONDITIONS AS OTHER PURCHASES.

AS FAR AS OUR TERMS OF EXCHANGE GO... WELL, YES...

SILENCE!

THE VILLAGE ELDER HAS PUT MR. LAWRENCE IN CHARGE OF THE NEGOTIATIONS! WE WILL HEAR HIM OUT!

LEFT TO STAND IN THE VILLAGE'S FAVOR, IT WILL INEVITABLY RESULT IN ANOTHER CONFLICT.

THIS WAS AN UNUSUAL ARRANGE-MENT.

WHAT SAY YOU? I BELIEVE BOTH SIDES CAN PROFIT HERE...

KUH FU FU!

(JI (STARE)

I-I SUPPOSE SO...

(BIKU! (FLINCH)

NO?

...IF YOU'LL JUST LISTEN TO MY PROPOSAL.

AND THEY'RE DONE.

GASHA (KACLUNK)

"COOKIES"... YOU SAY?

HOYA (STEAM)

HOYA

THEY SMELL SWEET...

MM... DELICIOUS.

SAKU (CRUNCH)

ALSO, BISHOP VAN, I'D ASK YOU TO ENDORSE BOTH THE VILLAGE WHEAT AND THESE COOKIES.

MR. RIENDOTT, WILL YOU PURCHASE THESE COOKIES INSTEAD OF THE VILLAGE'S WHEAT?

THESE WILL SURELY SELL!

THEY'RE TASTY!

ZAKU

ZAKU

...CERTAINLY.

ALSO I'D LIKE YOU TO PROHIBIT THE BAKING OF COOKIES IN VILLAGES OTHER THAN TEREO.

A SOUTHERN TREAT, THEY WERE BAKED BEFORE RISING, LIKE LEAVENED BREAD.

SAKU

SAKU

SAKU

STARTING WITH FLOUR AND WATER, BUT ADDING OIL, EGGS, AND HONEY BEFORE BAKING RESULTED IN SOMETHING SURPRISINGLY DELICIOUS.

HAA (SIGH)

HA! HA! HA!

SO LONG AS THEY HAD THE SUPPORT OF RIENDOTT AND BISHOP VAN, IT WOULD REMAIN A MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL RELATION-SHIP.

THE TOWN BAKERS MIGHT RAISE A FUSS, BUT THE COOKIES LOOKED NOTHING LIKE BREAD.

AS EVAN WAS UNFAMILIAR WITH UNLEAVENED BREAD, LAWRENCE HAD SUSPECTED THIS PROPOSAL WOULD GO OVER WELL.

YOU'RE MAKING SUCH A MESS!

COOKIES WERE OFTEN EATEN IN THE SOUTH BUT HAD NOT SPREAD TO THE NORTH FOR SOME REASON.

SAKU

SAKU

SAKU (CRUNCH)

SAKU

MISS ELSA.

SAKU

SAKU

SAKU

THE COOKIES ARE SELLING EXTREMELY WELL IN ENBERCH.

I HEARD FROM EVAN.

THANKS TO YOU, THE VILLAGE WILL BE OUT OF DANGER FOR SOME TIME TO COME.

I TRULY THANK YOU.

THINK NOTHING OF IT.

I TRUST YOU'LL BE THINKING AHEAD.

HMPH, "FOR SOME TIME TO COME," INDEED...

FOR OUR PART, WE WERE ABLE TO GET ANOTHER LOOK AT YOUR LIBRARY, SO—

MOGU (MUNCH)

KAAA (BLUSH)

SORRY TO HAVE STRIPPED YOU DOWN IN THE MIDST OF THIS COLD SEASON.

PORO (DROP)

PORO

HEH!

GYUM (SQUISH)

DON'T GET CRUMBS ON THE BOOK.

FROM NOW ON...

...I'LL TRY TO CONSIDER MY OWN SOLUTIONS.

'TIS WELL, THEN

HMPH.

YES, WELL...

...SO LONG AS YOU CLEAN UP AFTER YOURSELVES, I DON'T MIND.

TO AVOID PUTTING DOWN ROOTS IN THE VILLAGE, THEY MADE READY TO LEAVE.

A FEW DAYS PASSED.

WELL, SHALL WE GO?

WAAAA (CHEEER)

ZA (SKSH)

MAY GOD'S BLESSING GO WITH YOU.

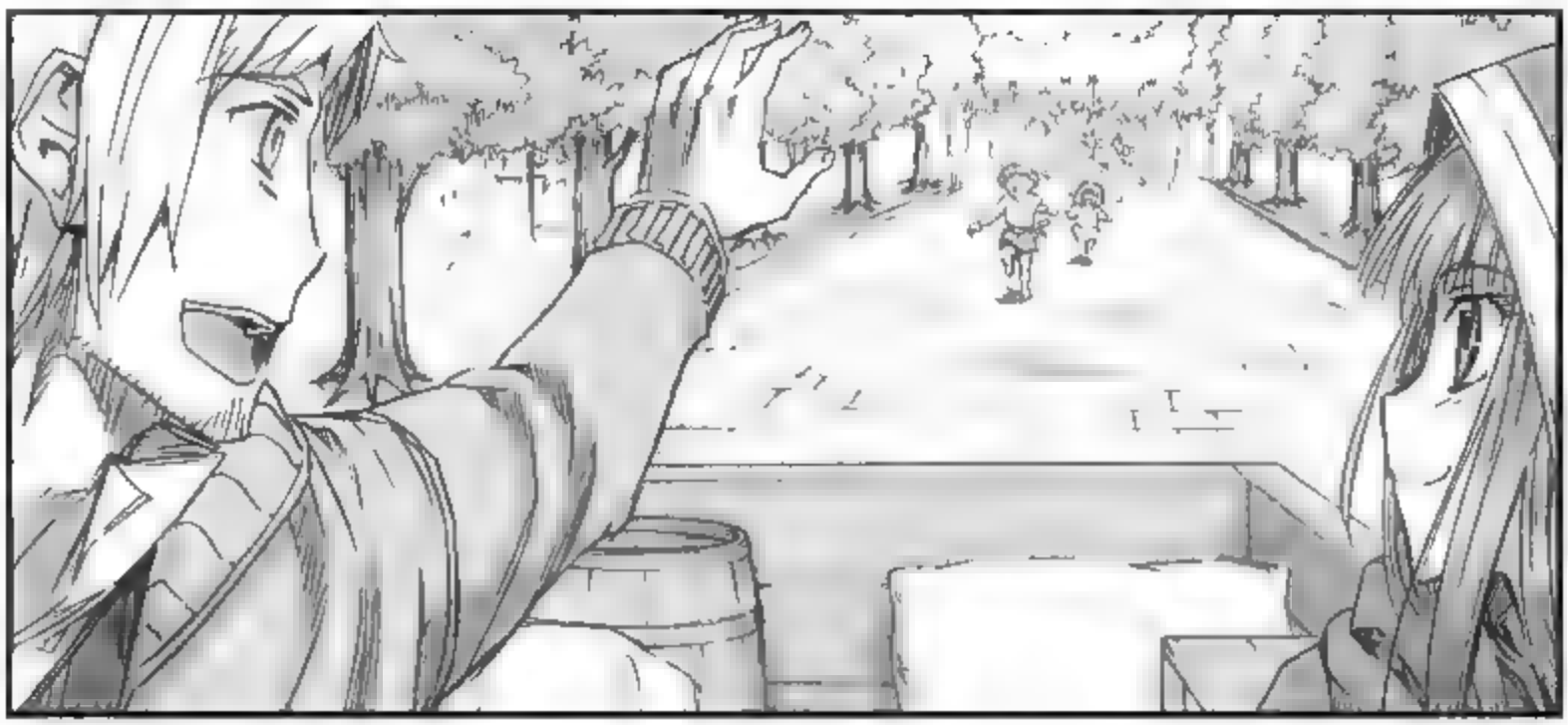
...THANK YOU FOR TEACHING ME SO MUCH!

MR. LAWRENCE ...

GASHI (GRIP)

I PROBABLY CAN'T DO WHAT YOU DID, BUT I'LL WORK HARD HERE!

GARA
GARA (RATTLE)
GARA
A TRAVELER DOES NOT LEAVE BEHIND REGRET BUT GOOD MEMO-RIES!
FARE-WELL!



THAT WAS A NICE VILLAGE.

GOTO (CLUNK)

GOTO

.....

GOSO

GOSO (DIG)

YOU KNOW WE HAVE PILES OF THOSE THINGS IN THE CART.

AAAHN!

ZAKU

ZAKU (CRUNCH)

AND JUST WHO WAS IT WHO MIRACULOUSLY SEPARATED THE GOOD WHEAT FROM THE BAD?

GOTO

GOTO

IF THIS IS LIKE WHEN YOU BOUGHT SO MANY APPLES WE COULD HARDLY EAT THEM ALL, YOU'LL HAVE NAUGHT BUT COOKIES FOR EVERY MEAL.

STILL ...

...MMPH. WE SURELY MET WITH CALAMITY THIS TIME AROUND.

SAKU (CRUNCH)

SAKU

GARA (RATTLE)

GARA

GARA

IF NOT FOR ME, YOU'D HAVE BEEN STRIPPED NAKED AND BURNED AT THE STAKE!

IS THAT ALL YOU CARE ABOUT?

SHAGU (CRUNCH)

SHAGU

GOSO

GOSO

WELL, WE GOT THEM TO BUY OUR EXCESS WHEAT QUITE DEARLY, SO WE MADE A PROFIT IN THE END.

'TWAS WORTH THE EFFORT.

GOTO

WELL, I SUPPOSE I DID ACCOMPLISH MY GOAL OF READING THOSE BOOKS.

GOTO (CLUNK)

GOTO

GARA

GARA (RATTLE)

...OR EARLY SUMMER AT THE LATEST.

THE PRECISE LOCATION OF YOITSU REMAINED UNCLEAR, BUT IT SEEMED THEY WOULD BE ABLE TO REACH IT AROUND THE END OF SPRING...

MOSSA

MOSSA (MUNCH)

HRM?

MOSSA

GUI (POKE)

DON'T LOOK AT ME SO DESIROUSLY.

GURI (GRIND)

GURI

I'VE HAD PLENTY, THANKS.

GOTO

GOTO

HYOI (PLUCK)

FINE.

GUI (POKE)

ZAKU (CRUNCH)

YOUR FACE SAYS OTHER-WISE.

IT'S RATHER SWEET...

SAKU (CRUNCH)

GUBI!! (GLUG)

JI! (STARE)

SAGU (NOSH)

.....

SAGU

HYOI (TOSS)

I SUPPOSE THAT'S NICE ONCE IN A WHILE...

I HAD THEM PUT EXTRA HONEY IN MINE.

GOTO

GOTO (CLUNK)

GOTO ゴト

PLI (FWIP) ッ

'TIS NOTHING.

WH—

WHAT IS IT?

GATA (CLACK) ガ

……!

GOTO ゴト

GOTO ゴト

……

SEEMS LIKE A TRAP... AN UNFAIR ONE.

ZAKU ザッ

ZAKU ザッ

SHE WANTS TO MAKE ME SAY IT, DOES SHE?

HAA (SIGH) はあ…

ZAKU ザッ

THERE'S SOME BUSINESS WHERE THERE'S GOOD MONEY TO BE MADE, I HEAR.

OH?

SAY...

AYE?

IT'LL TAKE US OUT OF OUR WAY, THOUGH.

GOTO ゴト

GOTO (RATTLE) ゴト

GOTO ゴト

MOZO (FWISH) モゾ

MOZO モゾ

GUN (THUD)

I SUPPOSE IT CANNOT BE HELPED. I'LL ACCOMPANY YOU.

FUUU (SIGH)

SO!

TELL ME ABOUT THIS BUSINESS.

DON (POOMF)

WELL, AHEAD OF US THERE'S A TOWN CALLED LENOS ...

HOLO DID NOT WANT THE JOURNEY TO END EITHER.

BUT SHE COULDN'T ADMIT IT ALOUD.

WHAT A CHARMLESS GIRL.

SPICE & WOLF

OH-HOH! SUCH FINE CARGO!

SO IT'S JUST YOU COMING ABOARD?

MY COMPANION AS WELL— SHE'S OFF BUYING RATIONS—

—AND HERE SHE IS.

SPICE & WOLF

FROM THE VILLAGE OF TEREO, IT IS A FEW DAYS' JOURNEY BY HORSE-CART TO THE TOWN OF LENOS, A GREAT FUR-TRADING CENTER.

JUST AS THE CANCELLATION OF THE NORTHERN CAMPAIGN* HAD A SERIOUS EFFECT ON THE CITY OF RUVINHEIGEN...

...THE TOWN'S STOREHOUSES SWELLED WITH FURS THAT WENT UNSOLD THANKS TO THE FAILURE OF THE ARMIES TO PLACE THEIR ANNUAL ORDERS.

*NORTHERN CAMPAIGN: A MARCH INTO THE PAGAN LANDS OF THE NORTH THAT SUPPORTED THE ECONOMIES OF THE TOWNS ALONG THE WAY THANKS TO ITS SCALE. SEE VOLUME 2.

IN ORDER TO AVERT FINANCIAL CATASTROPHE, THE CITY'S ADMINISTRATORS—THE COUNCIL OF FIFTY—WAS EVIDENTLY FORCED TO ACCEPT HARSH TERMS.

AS A RESULT, MERCHANTS FROM OTHER TOWNS CONVERGED ON LENOS WITH AN EYE TOWARD BUYING UP THE RAW FURS, WHOSE PRICES HAD COLLAPSED DUE TO THE GLUT.

AND THEIR EFFORTS TO STOP THE MERCHANTS FROM SHIPPING HUGE AMOUNTS OF FUR DOWN THE RIVERS QUICKLY TURNED TO VIOLENCE...

BUT FEARING FOR THEIR LIVELIHOODS, THE FURRIERS' UNION IN THE CITY FURIOUSLY OPPOSED THESE MEASURES.

SHE'S CALLED HOLO.

SO WHAT WAS YOUR NAME?

.....

BUT, MY, THIS IS A GOOD OMEN FOR OUR SAFE PASSAGE DOWNRIVER!

I'M RAGUSA, MASTER OF THE ROAM RIVER!

A FINE NAME!

SO!

THERE YOU HAVE IT!

GAH HA HA!

ヒョイ

HYOI (LIFT)

MOST SHIPS HAVE THE LIKENESS OF A BEAUTIFUL MAIDEN FIXED TO THEIR PROWS, YOU SEE.

?

WE'RE NOT SCHEMING TO MOVE FUR LIKE EVERYBODY ELSE IS, BUT WE DO HAVE SOME CARGO THAT NEEDS TO BE HURRIED.

JUST PRETEND YOU'RE SAILING ON A GREAT BIG SHIP.

SO...

...ARE YOU READY?

TO (TMP)

WE'LL LEAVE THE NAVIGATION TO YOU.

AYE!

GU (YANK)

DON (WHUMP)

BASHA (SPLASH)

KAN

KAN

KAN (CLANG)

KAN

LIVELY, ISN'T IT?

GOOD VOYAGE TO YOU!

HA! HA! HA!

MY THANKS!

BASHA

CURSE YOU!

BASHA

DOBON (KASPLASH)

KARAAAN
カラーン
KARAAAN
カラーン
KARAAAN
(DONNNG)
カラーン
HA!
HA!
HA!
THE ROAM RIVER'S MY HOME NOW!
I WAS JUST THINKING I USED TO BE AS NERVOUS AS YOU ARE.
NOT AT ALL.
SEE YOOOU!
ヨロ..
YORO (SWAY)
YOU LAUGH AT ME?
YOU ALL RIGHT?
LOOKS LIKE WE MADE IT...
GURA
GURA (LIST)
GURA

CAREFUL, YOUR FANGS ARE SHOWING BEHIND THOSE LIPS.

IT IS BECAUSE I TRUST YOU THAT I WOULD ADMIT SUCH WEAKNESS.

HRM, I'VE NO PARTICULAR FEAR OF WATER, BUT...

...'TIS UNSETTLING INDEED WHEN THE CRAFT ROCKS.

(CHAP...) (SLOSH)

.....

IS THAT ...?

HM?

YOUR KINDNESS IS SO VERY FRIGHTFUL.

PA (PAT)

TEE HEE HEE!

YOU FOOL.

FOR MY PART, I'M AFRAID OF YOUR SMILE.

MOGU

MOGU (MUNCH)

ACCORDING TO WHAT THEY'D LEARNED IN LENOS, YOITSU MIGHT HAVE BEEN SITUATED IN THE MOUNTAINS OF ROEF.

BUT OWING TO THE SEVERITY OF THE UNREST THERE, LAWRENCE AND HOLO COULDN'T ADVANCE, AND...

...ELECTED TO HEAD DOWNRIVER TO THE TOWN OF KERUBE TO GATHER MORE INFORMATION FOR A WHILE.

KU (STRETCH)

FUAA (YAWN)

THERE'S NOTHING TO DO.

I'M JUST HAPPY NOT TO HAVE TO BE HOLDING THE REINS.

PI (FLICK)

SA (WISH)

!

BOFU (PUFF)

BAAAH...

WHY DON'T YOU TRY COUNTING SHEEP?

I'M SURE YOU'D FALL ASLEEP SOON ENOUGH.

SAY.

?

YOU'D BEST STOP—

BASH! (SMACK)

THAT WON'T DO.

I WAS COUNTING UNTIL A MOMENT AGO, BUT... IT ONLY MADE ME HUNGRY.

STILL...

...ONCE WE'VE MADE IT DOWN THE RIVER TO OUR DESTINATION, WHAT THEN?

FUEEEH

HERE, HOLD STILL.

PEH!

PEH!

WHAT THEN, YOU ASK?

AYE. AFTER.

THE MOUNTAINS OF ROEF...

FOOD AND AMUSE-MENTS ARE PLENTIFUL IN KERUBE.

SO WE COULD EASILY WAIT THERE UNTIL THE SNOW MELTS...

NYOHHIRA

ROEF

LENOS

KERUBE

IF WE WENT BY NYOHHIRA, THAT IS.

MY GUESS IS IT WOULD TAKE TEN DAYS FROM LENOS TO NYOH-HIRA.

IF WE HEAD UP THE ROEF RIVER, WE MIGHT WELL LOSE OUR WAY.

STILL, THE MOUN-TAINS CHANGE WHEN PEOPLE GET INTO THEM.

TEN DAYS FOR A LEISURELY SOAK IN THE HOT SPRINGS OF NYOHHIRA.

IF WE CAN'T WAIT FOR SPRING AND TAKE ROADS WITH LITTLE SNOW, IT'LL BE MORE LIKE TWENTY...

NYU~ (POP)

YOU'RE MAKING YOUR MONEY-COUNTING FACE!

TEN DAYS' STAY IN A HOT SPRINGS INN...

HA (GASP)

HEE-HEE!

HEH!

?

HUH?

WE'LL INCLUDE THE HEAD COUNT TAX IN YOUR FARE.

THIS IS A CHECKPOINT OF THE DIEJIN DUKEDOM, WHICH RECENTLY HAD A CHANGE OF LEADERSHIP.

AHOY!

STRANGE TO SEE SUCH QUARRELING.

DO YOU THINK THERE'S A COMPLAINT ABOUT THE HIGH TOLL?

ZZZ...

DOUBTFUL. IT'S ONLY THE ONES COMING FROM THE SEA THAT COMPLAIN ABOUT THE TAXES.

THEY HAVE TO PAY FOR HORSES TO PULL THEIR CRAFT UPSTREAM, THEN PAY CARGO TAXES ON TOP OF THAT.

BUT ISN'T THAT TRUE FOR YOU AS WELL WHEN YOU GO BACK UPRIVER?

HA HA HA!

FOR FOLKS LIKE ME, THE RIVER IS HOME.

IT'S ONLY NATURAL TO PAY RENT.

I SEE.

BUT THE DUKE'S SEAL IS RIGHT HERE!

IT'S A FAKE, I TELL YOU!

ヒョイ
HYOI (LIFT)

IF YOU DON'T GET YOURSELF HENCE, WE'VE GOT OTHER IDEAS!

MIND YOURSELF, LAD! NOW THEN, MOVING ON TO THE TOLL...

WHAT IS THE MATTER?

COULDN'T BE!

HA! HA! HA! HA!

WHO'S THAT? THE LENNON MASTER'S APPRENTICE?

NOT EVEN I CAN HEAR SUCH THINGS WHILE NAPPING.

HMM?

SHOULDN'T YOU HAVE BEEN ABLE TO HEAR WITH THOSE EARS OF YOURS?

HE'S BEEN SWINDLED.

I FEEL A BIT SORRY FOR HIM.

ON A LARGER SCALE, TAX COLLECTION AUTHORIZATION DOCUMENTS FOR THIS RIVER HAVE PROBABLY BEEN CAUGHT.

IT HAPPENS SOMETIMES, FORGED TAX EXEMPTION DOCUMENTS OR FAKE DEMANDS OF PAYMENT FROM A LOCAL LORD.

YOU THINK ME UNFEELING, DO YOU?

AS I RECALL, WHEN YOUR OWN AVARICE CAUSED YOU TO STUMBLE, YOU WALKED ALL OVER THE CITY, DESPERATE FOR AID.

PER-HAPS, BUT...

HE'LL LEARN SOMETHING FROM THIS.

GISHI (CREAK)

#1

...I WAS STILL THE ONE DOING THE WALKING.

BUT TRYING TO SAVE SOMEONE WHO ISN'T TRYING TO SAVE HIMSELF, WELL...

...TO TURN AWAY SOMEONE ASKING FOR HELP.

I'M NOT SO COLD AS...

MUU (IRIO)

むぅ…

!

MAS-TER!

MASTER! IT'S ME! IT'S ME! I'M SO GLAD TO SEE YOU!

MASTER!

IF YOU'RE GOING TO DO THAT, YOU MAY AS WELL CHANGE INTO A PRIEST'S ROBES AND HEAD FOR THE NEAREST CHURCH—

I MUST THANK THE GODS FOR THIS GOOD FORTUNE!

I HAD NOTHING TO EAT AND WAS IN A REAL JAM!

THAT'S ENOUGH FROM YOU, RUNT!

LOOKS LIKE HE'S SEEKING HELP.

NN!?

WHA!?

SFX: JITA BATA (FLAIL)

MAS-TER!

INTO THE RIVER WITH YOU!

HOLD THERE A MOMENT.

YOU WON'T GET AWAY WITH IT!

SULLYING THE NAME OF DUKE DIEJIN AT HIS CHECK-POINT!

HAA (SIGH)

IT'S TRUE— I DO KNOW THE BOY.

DOSA (FLUMP)

サッ

……

GIGI (CREAK)

キィ キィ

WHAT A STRANGE FELLOW.

HEY, YOU'RE HOLDING UP THE LINE! MOVE YOUR BOAT OUT!

AYE-AYE!

?

?

GOKU (GULP)

WE'VE COME THIS FAR, SO I GUESS IT CAN'T BE HELPED.

HFF!

HFF!

THANK... YOU...

YOU... SAVED ME...

YOUR FACE IS STILL BLUE

WHEN YOU'VE CALMED YOURSELF, YOU SHOULD SLEEP.

WILL THIS BLANKET BE ENOUGH?

ZZZ...
スー
ZZZ...
スー
THE BLESSINGS OF GOD...
...BE UPON YOU BOTH...
PASHA (PLASH)
PACHA (PLIP)
GYU_ (WRING)
ENOUGH OF THAT
IT'S THE PRIVILEGE OF CHILDREN TO BE CARED FOR SO.
SHOULD I NOW DO THE SAME FOR YOU?
IS HE ALL RIGHT AT LEAST?
FROM WHERE I STAND, YOU'RE STILL A CHILD.
HEH-HEHN!
フフン

I WONDER WHO CHEATED HIM.

IT DIDN'T HAPPEN THIS YEAR, BUT COME THE COLD SEASON...

...A GREAT NUMBER OF PEOPLE COME FROM THE SOUTH, AND AMONG THEM ARE SWINDLERS APLENTY.

MAYBE PEOPLE BECAME WISE TO IT. SINCE THEN YOU HARDLY EVER SEE THEM.

THE YEAR BEFORE LAST, THERE WAS A VERY SKILLED FORGER...

...AND EVEN SHARP MERCHANTS WERE BEING TAKEN IN BY HIM.

KASA (RUSTLE)

A DECLARATION OF RIGHT TO COLLECT TAXES FROM DUKE DIEJIN, EH?

IT'S POORLY MADE, THOUGH.

THE SCRIPT AND SEAL BOTH ARE THIRD-RATE AT BEST.

OF COURSE, IF HE'D COPIED THE TRUE SEAL, THE PUNISHMENT WOULD BE FAR WORSE, SO IN A WAY HE'S LUCKY.

WELL, SO LONG AS THE EXTRA FARE GETS PAID, ANYONE'S MORE THAN WELCOME ABOARD!

AH, ER... RIGHT.

I SUPPOSE THAT PUTS AN END TO YOUR GROOMING FOR A WHILE.

WHA —!?

SPICE & WOLF

THANK YOU... TRULY, THANK YOU.

BY THE BLESSING OF SAINT LAMBARDOS OR PERHAPS THE GODDESS OF THE HARVEST, THEY'D ADDED THE BOY TO THEIR PARTY. AND HE MUST HAVE BEEN TIRED...

...FOR HE SLEPT NEARLY A FULL DAY BEFORE AWAKENING AND INTRODUCING HIMSELF.

HAGU

HAGU (SCARF)

MY NAME'S... MMPH... TOTE COL.

I WAS A STUDENT IN A TOWN CALLED AQUENT...BUT I RAN OUT OF MONEY.

MM...

!

SO I CAME TO THIS AREA SEEKING WORK.

BUT NO MATTER WHERE I GO, THEY SAY THERE'S NO WORK TO BE HAD THIS YEAR.

ONE TRENNI... AND EIGHT LUTE.

SO, COL...

...HOW MUCH DID YOU PAY FOR THESE PAPERS?

THAT'S QUITE AN INVEST-MENT.

WAS THE TRAVELING PEDDLER YOU BOUGHT FROM SO IMPRESSIVE-LOOKING?

SO...

...I WAS THINKING I'D LET YOU HAVE THESE DOCUMENTS ...

GUSU (SOB)

BUT! ALAS, I AM NOT LONG FOR THIS WORLD AND WISH TO RETURN HOME BEFORE I DIE!

WELL...

JUST LOOK AT MY RIGHT ARM! THIS IS THE PRICE I PAID FOR THESE...

MORE THAN HALF OF THEM AREN'T EVEN FORG-ERIES.

WHA—?

.....

ABOUT THESE PAPERS...

HE'S FAMOUS AROUND HERE.

GAKU (SLUMP)

I CAN READ, BUT...

...THERE WERE SO MANY...

THIS KIND OF THING, I SEE IT ALL THE TIME.

LOOK HERE, THERE ARE EVEN NOTICES OF PAYMENT SENT.

WH-WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

MOST OF THESE ARE DOCUMENTS STOLEN FROM SOME TRADING FIRM SOME-WHERE.

...AND PAPER'S ALWAYS USEFUL, SO THEY'VE BEEN PASSED AROUND FROM ONE MERCHANT TO THE NEXT, NEVER GETTING THROWN AWAY.

THESE PAPERS AREN'T GOOD FOR DRAWING ANY MONEY, BUT THEY'RE GOOD FOR GETTING A LAUGH AMONG MERCHANTS...

GUBI (GLUG)

WHO WOULD STEAL THIS?

USUALLY AN AP-PRENTICE AT THE FIRM.

IT'S BENEATH THEIR DIGNITY.

I SEE. IF THEY FRANTICALLY CHASE DOWN PAPERS, STRANGE RUMORS WILL START TO SWIRL.

ONE WHO'S GOTTEN TIRED OF BEING WORKED TOO HARD—THEY'LL GRAB THEM ON THEIR WAY OUT AS A FINAL PIECE OF PAY.

THAT'S ABOUT THE SIZE OF IT.

THEY SAY IGNORANCE IS A SIN...

IF YOU TAKE MONEY, THE COMPANY WILL COME AFTER YOU IN EARNEST. BUT WITH SOME-THING LIKE THIS, THE FIRM HAS ITS REPUTATION TO CONSIDER, SO IT'S HARDER FOR THEM TO PURSUE.

WHAT SAY I BUY THESE IN EXCHANGE FOR YOUR FOOD AND FARE?

!

PASHI (THWAP)

HOW ABOUT TEN LUTE?

FINE, FINE.

PURU (TREMBLE)

THAT FACE IS MORE POWERFUL THAN ANY SOB STORY...

YOU LOOK AS THOUGH YOU'VE GOTTEN ANOTHER WEAPON FOR YOUR ARSENAL.

WHATEVER DO YOU MEAN?

TWENTY LUTE, THEN.

I CAN GO NO HIGHER.

KASA (RUSTLE)

T-
TWENTY
LUTE,
THEN...

THAT BOY, HE'S QUITE EARNEST.

GASA (SHFF)

OH, INDEED. TO GET TAKEN IN THE WAY HE WAS, HE WOULD HAVE TO BE.

AHEM!

I HEARD SOMEWHERE THAT THE MORE EARNEST THE MAN, THE EASIER A MARK HE MAKES.

SO...HAVE YOU FOUND ANYTHING OF INTEREST?

DAKU (NIP)

...A FEW THINGS, I SUPPOSE.

THEY'RE FROM THE JEAN COMPANY IN KERUBE.

SENT TO A DIFFERENT COMPANY UP THE ROAM RIVER.

AND THIS ONE IS A STATEMENT OF DELIVERY FROM THE PARTY THEY'RE SELLING TO, ACROSS THE SEA IN THE KINGDOM OF WINFIEL.

THIS IS A SET OF PURCHASE AND SALE DOCUMENTS FOR THE SAME GOODS.

SEEMS OUR ONE-ARMED SWINDLER MAKES THE TERRITORY ALONG THE ROAM RIVER HIS HOME.

HENCE THE COINCI-DENCE.

OH, AYE?

FOR EXAMPLE, THESE TWO PAGES.

THEY'RE DOCUMENTS REGARDING A DEAL FOR COPPER COINS CALLED "ENI."

WHY WOULD YOU IMPORT COIN?

ARE STILL OTHERS PLAYING AT THAT SCHEME FROM PAZZIO?

HFF!

HFF!

HFF!

THE PRICE AND AND AMOUNT ARE QUITE REASON-ABLE.

NO, THIS IS JUST TO USE AS CHANGE.

MM. I SUPPOSE THEY'D BE IN TROUBLE IF THEY COULDN'T MAKE CHANGE.

MU CIRK

YOU'RE THE ONLY PERSON WHO SPENDS SILVER COINS AT FOOD STALLS.

TRAVELERS CONSTANTLY TAKE SMALL CHANGE OUT OF A CITY...

...SO THEY HAVE TO CONSTANTLY IMPORT COPPER COIN.

HA! HA! HA!

UNFOR-TUNATELY, THERE'S NOTHING WORTH MONEY HERE.

HFF!

SO, IS IT...?

COULD IT BE...!?

HFF!

UM!

TA

TA

TA

TA (CRASH)

WAS THERE SOMETHING ELSE?

BUT, YES, THAT'S NOT ALL...

THE PURCHASE AND EXPORT AMOUNTS DON'T ADD UP.

NO ONE IS MORE OBSESSED WITH NUMBERS THAN MER-CHANTS, SO I DOUBT IT'S A MISTAKE.

IN A WAY.

PA (BEAM)

Y-YES!

CAN YOU READ THIS?

JIII (STARE)

ODH, YOU'RE PRETTY GOOD.

TIN... GOLDSMITHING... AND...AH-NEE ...?

...WAX, GLASS BOTTLES, BOOKS... BUCKLES? IRON PLATE...

UM ...

...THEY'RE NOT MAKING UP THE DIFFERENCE FROM A PREVIOUS PURCHASE, YOU DON'T THINK?

PURCHASED... FIFTY-EIGHT CHESTS... EXPORTED...

KASA (FLAP)

...SIXTY CHESTS?

NOT "AHNEE," "ENI." IT'S A KIND OF COIN.

NEXT TO THE NAMES OF THE GOODS ARE THE AMOUNTS AND THE PRICES.

ラーん
HMMM?

GENERALLY PEOPLE TRY TO AVOID COMPLICATIONS.

THAT'S NOT IMPOSSIBLE, BUT COIN TRANSACTIONS ARE ESPECIALLY STRICT.

WAKU (EXCITED)
わく

THIS IS PROOF OF REGULAR PURCHASES.

HERE IT SAYS, "PER USLAL, TRANSPORT COSTS AND CUSTOMS DUTIES ARE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE BUYER."

わく WAKU

THAT'S TRUE...

HMPH!

STILL, WHY IS THE ORDER IN CHESTS? SHOULD COINS BE COUNTED OUT INDIVIDUALLY?

IF WE CAUGHT THEM SMUGGLING OR SOMETHING, THAT WOULD BE A DIFFERENT STORY.

AH, BUT THIS STILL ISN'T WORTH ANY MONEY TO US.

HMMM...

I SUPPOSE A MERCHANT'S COMMON SENSE ISN'T LIKE THE REST OF THE WORLD'S.

THEY'RE COUNTED IN CHESTS AND NOT INDIVIDUALLY...

...BECAUSE MERCHANTS WHO DEAL IN LARGE AMOUNTS OF COIN FIND THAT EASIER TO DO. THEY'RE STURDY AND HARDER TO STEAL...

IF THEY WERE MANAGED BY WEIGHT IN SACKS, THEY'D BE MORE VULNERABLE TO THEFT, BUT MORE THAN THAT, IT WOULD BE UNWIELDY.

NOW, THEN ...

...DO YOU KNOW HOW THE COIN AMOUNTS CAN BE THUS MANAGED IN CHESTS?

AH!

!

BA (WHAP)

I...

...I KNOW!

HA (GASP)

?

はぁぁ…
HAAA (SIGGH)

ER...

BECAUSE IF YOU USE A CERTAIN SIZE OF CHEST AND PACK THE COINS REGULARLY WITHIN IT, THERE WILL ALWAYS BE THE SAME AMOUNT INSIDE.

IF THE COINS ARE PACKED PRECISELY INTO IT...

...WHEN YOU OPEN THE CHEST, ANY THEFT WILL BE IMMEDIATELY OBVIOUS.

IT'S JUST SO.

NADE (PAT)

NADE

WHAT DID YOU STUDY?

YEARS AGO, I WOULD NEVER HAVE CONCEIVED OF THIS.

YOU REALLY ARE AN EDUCATED LAD.

BUT I'M AWFULLY SUR-PRISED.

NADE

NADE

...I'M ORIGINALLY FROM A PLACE IN THE ROEF MOUNTAINS CALLED PINU.

KYORO

キョロ

キョロ

KYORO (GLANCE)

OH? NOW THAT'S UN-EXPECTED.

UM.

ER...

CH-CHURCH LAW...

IT'S A VILLAGE THAT STILL WORSHIPS A PAGAN GOD...

ER...

!

GUI (TUG)

N...

GUI

NO...

UM...

I'VE HEARD THAT LORD PINU IS SUPPOSED TO BE A GREAT FROG.

...IS THAT— .....IS THAT GOD...

I SIMPLY HAVE A BIT OF HISTORY WITH THE CHURCH, IS ALL. PLEASE CONTINUE.

'TIS WELL.

ALL RIGHT.

.....A WOLF-GOD, BY ANY CHANCE?

...MAYBE THREE YEARS AGO... A GROUP OF MISSIONARIES ARRIVED.

IN A VILLAGE NEAR PINU...

THE HEADMEN OF ALL THE NEARBY VILLAGES MET AND HELD A MEETING TO DISCUSS HOW TO DEAL WITH THEM.

APPARENTLY THEY HADN'T MET LIKE THIS IN 220 YEARS.

I HEAR THEY WERE QUITE FORCEFUL WITH THEIR TEACHINGS.

I THINK I KNOW WHERE THIS IS GOING...

...AND WE WERE SAVED WHEN HE LEFT THE MOUNTAIN.

BUT EVENTUALLY THE LEADER OF THE CHURCH FELL ILL...

I'M SURE YOU CAN DO IT.

BUKU (BLUB)

THE HEADMAN... AND THE ELDERWOMAN... SUPPORTED ME...

COL WAS A BRIGHT LAD.

AND NO ONE OPPOSED YOUR DECISION?

JIJI (SOB)

HE WOULD STUDY CHURCH LAW AND EAT INTO ITS POWER STRUCTURES. THAT WAS HOW COL INTENDED TO PROTECT HIS VILLAGE.

HE REALIZED THE ABSURD POWER THAT CAME WITH WEARING THE ROBES OF A HIGH-RANKING PRIEST— THE POWER TO CONTROL HUMAN LIVES AT WILL.

THEY SECRETLY LENT ME SOME MONEY TOO...SO I HAVE TO FIND A WAY TO GET BACK INTO SCHOOL.

ABOUT THAT EN! COIN WE WERE JUST SPEAKING OF...

I CAN'T REALLY HELP YOU OUT WITH YOUR MONEY PROBLEMS RIGHT NOW, BUT...

GUSU (SNIFF)

OH! N-NO, THAT'S NOT—

...IF YOU CAN SOLVE THE MYSTERY OF THE MISSING CHESTS, THERE MIGHT BE A REWARD IN IT FOR YOU.

REALLY?

IT'S ALWAYS NICER TO TRAVEL FREE FROM WORRY, AFTER ALL.

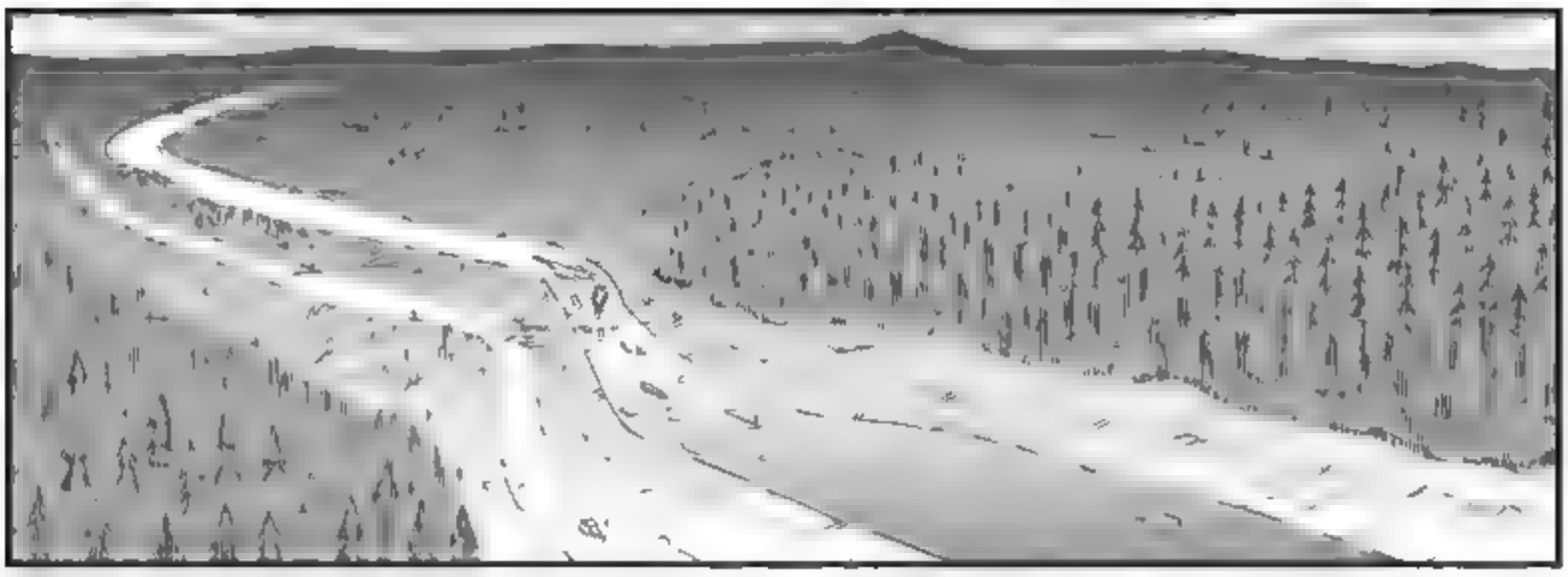
OH, THAT'S RIGHT.

WHY DON'T YOU THINK IT OVER TOO? YOU LIKE USING YOUR HEAD, RIGHT?

HUH ...?

WE'VE RUN INTO A BIT OF TROUBLE!

HEY THERE, MASTER!



WHAT A MESS... THE DAMNED THING'S RUN AGROUND...

GISHI (CREAK)

GIII..

THEY'RE SAYING IT'S HUNG UP ON THE WRECK OF A SUNKEN SHIP AT THE BOTTOM.

GIGI

HYOI (JUMP)

BY THE TIME I NOTICED, THEY'D ALREADY STARTED PILING UP.

THEY'RE ALL IN A TERRIBLE HURRY, TRYING TO MOVE THOSE DAMNED FURS...

I HEAR THE SUNKEN SHIP'S SAILORS WERE NOWHERE TO BE FOUND.

GA (THOK)

GA

ZASH (SHUP)

ZASH

...I SUPPOSE SOME MERCENARIES MIGHT'VE ATTACKED, BUT MORE LIKELY IT WAS MERCHANTS MOVING FURS...

YES, WELL...

MIGHT'VE BEEN A BIT OF FIGHTING!

LUCKILY, THEY'RE SAYING THERE'S NO SIGN OF MERCENARIES, SO THE ROUTE'LL SOON BE REOPENED...

AND ABOUT THAT!

GYU (FLEX)

HEAVE-HO!

HEEEEEEAVE-HO!

HEAVE-HO!

HEAVE-

BACHA (SPLURCH)

HOOO!

HOOO!

GISHI

GISHI (CREAK)

HOOO!

HEAVE-HO!

HEAVE-HO!

AAH!

BASHI (SMACK)

SSOC

BECHA (SPLAT)

MEKI (SNAP)

BAKI (CRACK)

HFF!

HFF!

THIS ISN'T GETTING US ANY-WHERE...

OUCH.

DO (THUP)

DO

SORRY ABOUT THAT.

THIS REALLY IS THE WORST LUCK. I GUESS THEY'LL BE ABLE TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT BY TOMORROW MORNING.

I THINK WE'RE STOPPING FOR TODAY.

I'LL TAKE YOU AT YOUR WORD, THEN.

HA HA HA!

THAT'S A MERCHANT FOR YA.

PWAH!

SO LONG AS YOU'LL LOWER YOUR FARE A BIT, I DON'T MIND AT ALL.

CAN NOTHING BE DONE?

I RECKON SO. STILL, THIS IS MADNESS.

THEY COULD BE STRAPPED TO THE BREAKING WHEEL FOR THIS, WITHOUT SO MUCH AS A BY-YOUR-LEAVE. TERRIFYING.

DO YOU THINK THE SHIP SINKING HAS ANYTHING TO DO WITH THE FUR TRADE?

I'M SURE COUNT BULGAR WILL BRING A MOUNTAIN OF FINE HORSES TO PULL IT FREE.

HA!

HA!

HA!

IT WAS THE SORT OF DANGER THAT A GREATER MERCHANT SHRUGGED OFF WITHOUT SO MUCH AS A THOUGHT.

EVEN AS A FELLOW MERCHANT, I MUST SAY I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT.

GOSHI (RUB)

GOSHI

STILL, IT'S QUITE IRRITATING. JUST BEING DELAYED IS BAD ENOUGH, BUT...

...WHEN I THINK OF WHAT'LL HAPPEN ONCE I MAKE IT TO KERUBE, IT'S DOWNRIGHT DEPRESSING.

OH. THAT'S RIGHT...

BY THE WAY...

...DID SOMETHING HAPPEN WITH YOUR LOVELY COMPANION?

WHA ...!?

WHY, I JUST WONDERED WHY SHE HADN'T COME BACK TO YOU NOW THAT THINGS HAVE CALMED DOWN A BIT.

GUESS I WAS RIGHT.

YOU CAN'T TELL ME YOU DIDN'T NOTICE! SHE DIDN'T SEEM TO WANT TO LEAVE YOUR SIDE FOR A MOMENT!

GAH HA HA!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED, BUT BE SURE TO MAKE UP WITH HER BEFORE WE SET OUT AGAIN.

SAY.

KOKU KOKU (NOD)

BOLUH (FWOOOM)

WAAAA (CHEER)

WAA

HYUUU

THAT'S THE WAY!

HYUUU (WHISTLE)

I SUPPOSE SHE WON'T BE FOUND OUT...

WAI

WA.

WAI (MERRY)

IT QUITE SUITS HER!
GAH HA HA!
SHE'S LIKE SOME NIMBLE CAT, I SAY!

I'M GOING TO HAVE TO FIGURE OUT WHY HOLO'S ANGRY WITH ME...
NOW, DRINK UP! DRINK UP!

GORO

GORO RUMBLE

IT SEEMS TRAFFIC WAS EFFECTIVELY STOPPED.

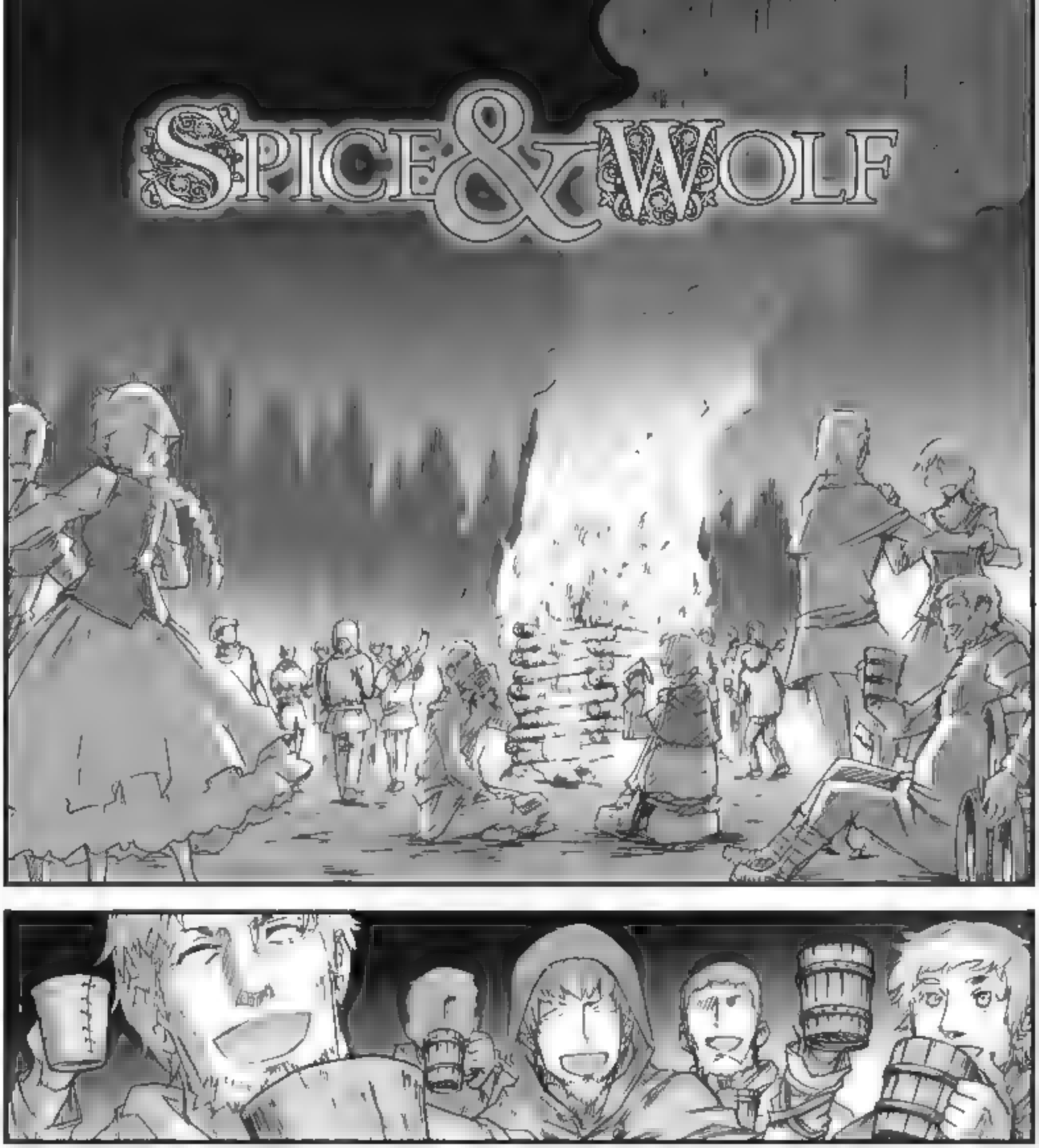
GOTO

GOTO (CLOP)

GOTO

I SEE.

SPICE & WOLF


SPICE&WOLF

FURA

AH... YES, EITHER THAT OR A PLACE CALLED YOITSU...

FURA (WOBBLE)

SO YOU WANTED TO KNOW OF ROEF?

WHEEEN!

YOU JUST HEAD BACK UP THIS RIVER. THE ROEF RIVER JOINS UP WITH IT.

BUT ROEF'S HARDLY WORTH ASKING ABOUT.

I'VE NOT HEARD OF THIS YOITSU.

AH, I HAVE IT.

URGH

HEY, ZONAL, WAKE UP!

HMMM

INTER-ESTING, EH...?

NO, I MEAN... CAN YOU NOT TELL ME SOMETHING MORE... INTER-ESTING?

MNNGH... UUH... CAN'T HOLD ANY MORE...

DOSA (FLUMP)

YOU SAID YOU TOOK A STRANGE JOB RECENTLY, DIDN'T YOU?

HUH?

I BROUGHT COPPER OUT OF THE MOUNTAINS THERE... IT FLOWED LIKE WATER.

AND THE LIQUOR THERE'S FIRST-RATE...

IDIOT! HEY! YOU BROUGHT IT OUT OF LESKO, ON THE ROEF HEADWATERS, DIDN'T YOU?

WHEW!

LESKO? AH, YES, IT'S A GOOD TOWN...

DOOON (WHUMP)

GABA (LURCH)

OH, MY COPPER-SKINNED BRIDE!

THE BLESSINGS OF FIRE AND WATER BE UPON YOUR SHINING SKIN!

"COPPER-SKINNED BRIDE," HE SAID... DID HE MEAN A STILL?

MM? OH, AYE! YOU'RE QUITE KNOWL-EDGE-ABLE.

GJOOO (SNOOORE)

WORTH-LESS!

HE'D BEEN CARRYING MONEY ORDERS FOR THE SAME COMPANY OVER AND OVER.

GO (CLONK)

THE LIQUOR YOU'RE DRINKING WAS PROBABLY DISTILLED IN A LESKO STILL.

...? WOULDN'T THAT BE... THE SORT OF LETTER YOU'D LEAVE TO THE BUTCHER?

I'M AFRAID OLD ZONAL HAS GOTTEN HIMSELF MIXED UP IN SOME STRANGE DEALINGS. HE'S BEEN COMPLAINING ABOUT IT QUITE A BIT.

BE THAT AS IT MAY, THIS WON'T DO...

LIU (SNOORE)

!

WHERE WAS IT, AGAIN...? THE JEAN COMPANY, IN KERUBE, I THINK...

IT WASN'T JUST ONCE OR TWICE, YOU KNOW!

*MONEY ORDER: A WAY OF TRANSFERRING FUNDS BY PROOF OF LETTER OR STAMP WITHOUT MOVING COIN ITSELF

OVER AND OVER!

...HE WAS APPARENTLY GIVEN A CERTIFICATE OF REFUSAL.

WELL, WHEN HE DELIVERED A MONEY ORDER TO THE JEAN COMPANY IN KERUBE THAT HE'D PICKED UP IN LESKO...

A CERTIFICATE OF REFUSAL?

STRANGE, ISN'T IT? HE WAS GIVEN MONEY ORDERS TIME AND AGAIN, ONLY TO HAVE THEM REJECTED EVERY TIME.

.....

SOMEONE IS DEFINITELY UP TO SOMETHING.

IT'S A MONEY ORDER... IN OTHER WORDS, THEY'RE TRANSPORTING MONEY.

YAAAWN

AND MONEY'S VALUE IS ALWAYS CHANGING. IF THE VALUE CHANGED WHILE THE MONEY ORDER WAS IN TRANSIT...THEY MIGHT NOT WANT TO HONOR THE ORDER, OR...

HMM...

IT'S PROBABLY... NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.

TRUE ENOUGH.

HA! HA! HA!

...IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO KNOW EVERY-THING.

WHILE IT MAY BE THAT IGNORANCE IS A SIN...

THE WORLD IS FILLED WITH VEXING THINGS.

I WATCHED THE BOY'S CLUMSINESS WITH A SMILE, BUT NOW I SEE I'M NOT SO DIFFERENT MYSELF.

NADE

NADE (PET).

GAH HA HA!

IN-DEED!

HE SAYS HE WANTS TO BE A CHURCH ELDER... IF YOU WANT HIM TO OWE YOU A FAVOR, NOW'S YOUR CHANCE.

YORO WOBBLE

KRAFT LAWRENCE, WAS IT?

THE CHURCH... NOW I REMEMBER.

GUBIII (GLUG)

YOU'RE AWAKE, ARE YOU?

GA (CLONK)

DAMN... RIGHT... THERE'S LIQUOR TO BE DRUNK.

I HEARD TELL THAT EVEN A RUMOR OF ITS WHEREABOUTS WAS WORTH QUITE A REWARD.

THEY WERE LOOKING FOR A CERTAIN BOOK FOR YEARS...

ABOUT THE JEAN COMPANY YOU MENTIONED BEFORE...

IT TOLD HOW TO STRIP THE FOREST BARE AND BRING A HUGE AMOUNT OF COPPER OUT.

INDEED.

SHHH...

...THE SORT OF BOOK THAT WOULD CATCH THE CHURCH'S ATTENTION?

WOULD THAT HAVE BEEN...

YORO (SWAY)

THAT'S...

...QUITE SOME-THING...

YOU ALL RIGHT?

I'VE SEEN SOMETHING LIKE THAT, JUST ONCE...

A VILLAGE RUINED BY POLLUTION...

MOZO (SQUIRM)

MOZO

...NN.

MM...

...YOU'RE QUITE HEAVY.

UUUN...

.....

'TIS QUITE COLD TONIGHT.

MM.

PUI (FWIP)

THAT TRAVELING PERFORMER GIRL DID A LOVELY DANCE, DON'T YOU THINK?

WHA —?

BASHI (WHAP)

MM?

I-
I MAY HAVE CAUGHT COLD. MY NOSE IS ITCHY.

WE'LL HAVE TO FIND AN INN IN KERUBE, THEN.

HERE'S A THOUGHT— WHY DON'T YOU TURN INTO A WOLF AND PULL THE WRECK FREE THAT WAY—

HA (GASP)

JOKING ASIDE, HOLO HATES TAKING HER WOLF FORM IN FRONT OF OTHER PEOPLE.

BUT SHE'S SAVED ME MANY TIMES BY DOING JUST THAT...

OH, RIGHT ...

HON-ESTLY.

SHE'S LENT ME HER WISDOM OVER AND OVER... BUT FOR WHOSE SAKE?

YOU LIKE USING YOUR HEAD, RIGHT?

ONE CAN FLATTER A PIG RIGHT UP A TREE, BUT FLATTERING A MALE JUST MAKES HIM LOSE HIMSELF.

IF OUR POSITIONS WERE REVERSED, YOU WOULD SURELY HAVE BEEN JUST AS ANGRY.

...SORRY.

I'VE BEEN ALONE ON THE MOUNTAINTOP FOR A LONG TIME. I'VE HAD QUITE ENOUGH OF LOOKING DOWN ON OTHERS.

.....

HMPH

ふん

OF COURSE, YOU DO NOT JUST SEEK MY TEACH-INGS...

YOU WOULD TRY TO TAKE MY REINS. A RARE FOOL, INDEED.

YOU CAN'T HOPE TO SUCCEED, BUT...

...THERE IS NO MISTAKING THAT YOU WISH TO LOOK INTO MY EYES AS AN EQUAL.

BUT NOW, I...

LOOKING UP AT YOU THUS, I...

...I TRULY ENJOY IT.

COME NOW, YOU DID COME AFTER ME, DID YOU NOT?

NO DOUBT BECAUSE THE FACE YOU'RE LOOKING UP TO IS A FOOL'S FACE INDEED.

KUH FU FU!

TO HEAR HER TELL IT, IT HASN'T CHANGED MUCH FROM THE OLD DAYS.

I HEARD MUCH OF THE NORTHLANDS FROM THE TRAVELING GIRL.

APPARENTLY THEY JUST FINISHED WORKING IN NYOHHIRA.

ALWAYS SO STUBBORN.

JUUUN!

BA (FLIP)

WOULD YOU GET OFF ME? I'M THIRSTY.

TRYING TO HOLD HER REINS IS JUST ABOUT HOPE-LESS.

HA (GASP)

AND I'M UNDER YOU— LITERALLY, THIS TIME.

BEING ON TOP DOES SUIT ME, I MUST SAY.

クックック

EHEHE!

I DARESAY I'D LIKE SOME WATER MYSELF... HMM? WHERE DID MY ROBE GO?

IT'S AROUND YOUR WAIST

キョロ

キョロ

SFX: KYORO (GLANCE) KYORO

GASHI
GASHI (SWP)
JORI (ZWP)
YOU SAID YOU HEARD ABOUT NYOHHIRA, DIDN'T YOU?
MM.
KUH... WHEW... INTERESTING TALK, YOU SAY?
...PICKING UP FROM YESTERDAY... DID YOU HEAR ANY OTHER INTER-ESTING TALK?
SO ...
BUBA (SPLORT)

WHEW.

NOBODY KNEW THE NAME OF YOITSU...

...BUT MANY HAD HEARD OF THE MOON-HUNTING BEAR.

JUST WHO DO YOU THINK I AM?

DOES THAT MAKE YOU JEALOUS, I SUPPOSE?

I'M A LATE BLOOMER, AFTER ALL.

HM-HMMM!

I'M ONLY JUST GETTING STARTED! ALSO...

I MAY HAVE RETREATED FROM BEING WORSHIPPED ...

...BUT 'TWOULD BE LOVELY INDEED TO HAVE A THICK BOOK OF TALES RECORDED ABOUT ME, OF COURSE.

HISO (PSST)

SHALL I WRITE IT, THEN?

YOU'D EMBELLISH THINGS THAT DID AND DIDN'T HAPPEN, I SHOULDN'T WONDER.

ANYWAY, ALL I HEARD TELL OF WAS NYOHHIRA. THEY DON'T OFTEN GO INTO THE MOUNTAINS OF ROEF, THEY SAID.

APPARENTLY 'TIS NOT SO NICE A PLACE.

ARE YOU TRYING TO SAY I'D BE AS THICK AS THE BOOK I'D WRITE?

KUH!

KUH!

(BYU (SPLURT)

...THE COPPER MINES, EH?

KUH!

KUH!

THIS WON'T DO. AT THIS RATE, I WON'T BE ABLE TO HIDE ANYTHING FROM YOU.

THERE HAVE ALWAYS BEEN FOOLS WHO DIG INTO THE MOUNTAINS.

TIME PASSES, AND MEN GROW MORE NUMEROUS.

I WAS PREPARED FOR THAT MUCH.

STILL, KNOW THIS. 'TIS MY PROBLEM TO WORRY OVER.

WHEN I SEE YOU MAKE THAT FACE, I CAN'T WORRY ABOUT IT PROPERLY.

WHEN THE TIME COMES, I MAY NEED TO BORROW YOUR CHEST TO CRY UPON.

I SUPPOSE I'VE NO CHOICE BUT TO SAY YOU CAN COUNT ON ME.

THAT'S ONE PROMISE I'LL NEED FROM YOU.

MEKI

MEKI

MEKI (CRACK)

...NOTHING SO VERY INTERESTING, BUT...

HEE-HEE. BUT THEN WHAT OF YOU? DID YOU HEAR ANY INTERESTING TALK?

KOPO

KOPO

KOPO (BLUB)

KOPO

DA (DASH)

HURRY!

DON'T LET HER RUN AGROUND AGAIN, YA HEAR!?

PAKI (CREAK)

IT'S MOVING!

GODOO (SPLASH)

ZAPAA (BLOOSH)

THE BOAT!

BASHA (SPLASH)

GA (TUG)

WAA

WAA

WAA (CHEER)

WAAA

THERE MUST'VE BEEN SOME RAIN FARTHER UPRIVER.

WE'RE LUCKY THE RIVER SWELLED

THE FIRE IN LENOS MAY HAVE BROUGHT THE RAIN.

IT'S A BIT COMPLI-CATED TO THINK SO, BUT...

GORO
ゴゴ。

GORO
ゴゴ。

GORO
ゴゴ。

GORO (RUMBLE)
ゴゴ。

MR. LAWRENCE!

INDEED!

LOOKS LIKE WE'LL BE ABLE TO MAKE KERUBE AFTER ALL.

Spice & Wolf

SPICE & WOLF

THE PORT OF KERUBE IS A MEDIUM-SIZED TOWN SUPPORTED BY THE TRADE BETWEEN SEA AND RIVER.

GOODS COME AND GO FROM THE KINGDOM OF WINFIEL ACROSS THE STRAIT ON INTO THE INTERIOR OF THE CONTINENT.

UPON THE RIVER'S SANDY DELTA IS BUILT A GRAND MARKETPLACE— THIS IS THE HEART OF KERUBE'S COMMERCE.

THE RESIDENTIAL DISTRICTS LAY TO THE NORTH AND SOUTH OF THE RIVER, AND THE INHABITANTS OF EACH FEEL AS IF THEY LIVE IN A DIFFERENT TOWN FROM THE OTHERS...

SPICE & WOLF

ZUZU (SIP)

MUSHA (MUNCH)

MUSHA...

PAKU

PAKU (CHOMP)

I CAN HARDLY BELIEVE YOUR DANCING MADE YOU SO SORE. ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

AND A DAY LATER TOO.

OUCH ...

KON

KON (KNOCK)

IT'S COL! I'M BACK!

I WAS THINKING OF HEADING INTO THE TOWN TO GATHER INFORMATION, BUT I THINK YOU SHOULD REST.

MMPH ...

IT CERTAINLY SMELLS MEDICINAL. NOT SOMETHING YOU DRINK, I ASSUME?

PATAN (SHUT)

I THOUGHT I WOULD MAKE SOME MEDICINE TO HELP WITH HOLO'S CONDITION.

WHAT COULD YOU HAVE POSSIBLY GONE SHOPPING FOR AT SUCH AN EARLY HOUR?

GACHA (KACHIK)

IT'S A SECRET RECIPE PASSED DOWN IN MY VILLAGE. IT'S VERY EFFECTIVE!

IT'S THE LEAST I CAN DO...

YOU SIMPLY RUB IT ON, THEN WRAP IT WITH A BANDAGE.

I'LL WAIT OUT IN THE HALLWAY!

NYU (POKE)

OW...

NNGH...

COL'S DONE YOU SUCH A FAVOR, SO SHOW HIM WHERE IT HURTS.

THE SMELL'S STRONG, BUT YOU'LL GET USED TO IT.

I'M RUBBING IT ON NOW...

AYE.

MUSHA

MUSHA (MUNCH)

PETA (RUB)

PETA

THEY WERE FRANTICALLY SEARCHING FOR A BOOK ON THE SUBJECT.

YES, ACCORDING TO RAGUSA'S FRIEND...

GUSU (SNIFF)

WAS IT THE JEAN COMPANY...? THAT WAS TRYING TO BECOME INVOLVED IN THE MINES IN LESKO ...?

I PLAN TO HEAD OVER TO A TRADING GUILD HOUSE ON THE SOUTH SIDE AND ASK FOR A LETTER OF INTRODUCTION.

GUSHI (CRUMPLE)

SIMPLY GOING AROUND ASKING QUESTIONS WITH NO GOODS IN HAND MAKES ME RATHER SUSPICIOUS, AFTER ALL.

WE'RE... ON THE NORTH SIDE, YES?

THE NORTH'S QUITE A BIT CHEAPER. THIS SORT OF THING HAPPENS QUITE OFTEN IN TOWNS DIVIDED BY A RIVER.

RIGHT, ALL DONE.

PO (PUFF)

THIS PLACE IS A WELL-KEPT SECRET. THIS IS MY THIRD TIME.

MM.

YOU'VE NO COMPLAINTS WITH THE INN BED, HAVE YOU?

AYE, FROM THE OUTSIDE IT LOOKS LIKE A CRAFTSMAN'S SHOP.

KUH FU FU!

THE OWNER IS A FORMER CRAFTSMAN. HE'S A GOOD PERSON.

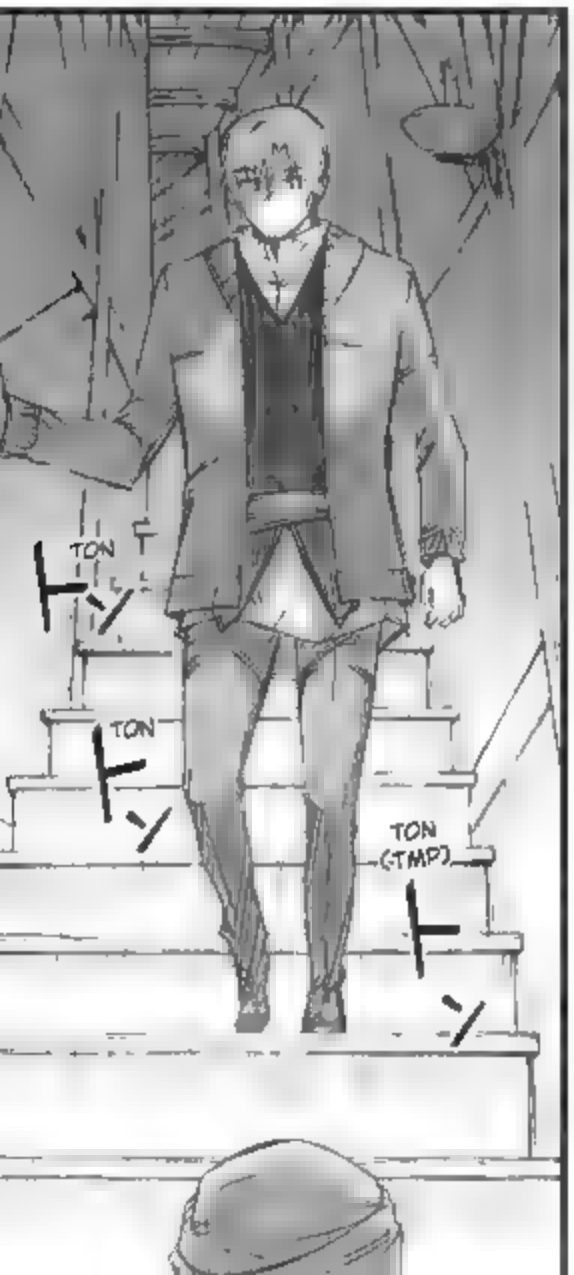
GOSHI (WIPE)

GOSHI

GACHA (KACHIKO
カチャ
KORON (TUMBLE)
コロン
YOU CAN COME BACK IN, COL.

UM...

ALL RIGHT!
I'LL BE BACK BEFORE NIGHTFALL. IF ANYTHING HAPPENS, I'M LEAVING IT UP TO YOU.
I'M OFF, THEN.
ば
BA (WHAP)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TON (TMP)
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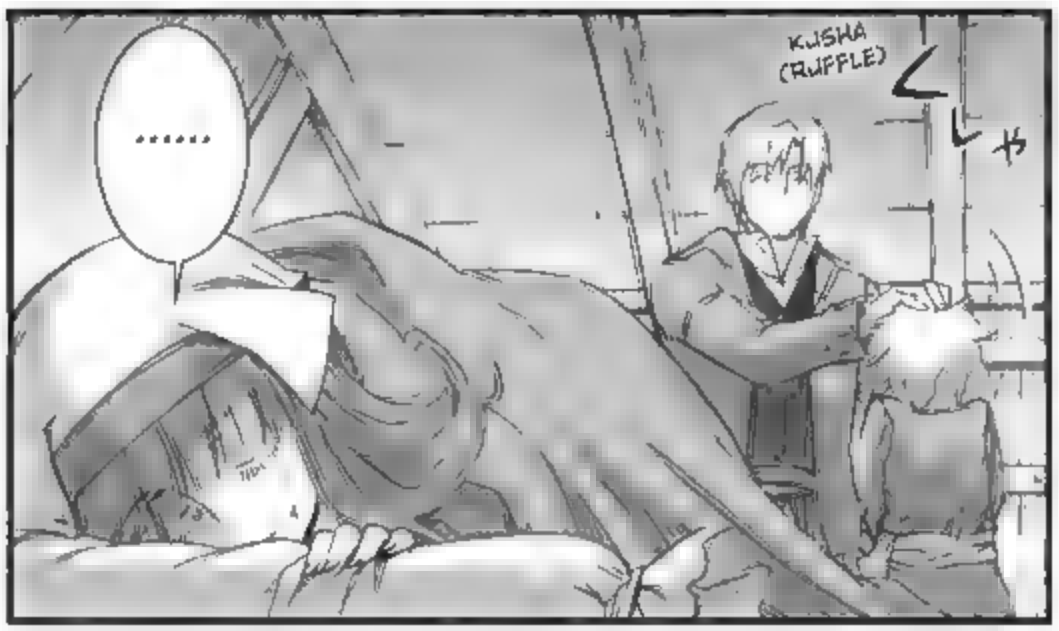
THANK YOU FOR THE BREAD. IT WAS DELI-CIOUS!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KUSHA (RUFFLE)
クシャ

GOTO
ゴト

GOTO
(GLOP)
ゴト

GACHA
(KACHIK)
ガチャ

I'M HEADING OUT FOR A BIT.

.....

SO THERE'S ANOTHER GUEST ON OUR FLOOR ...

KACHA (KACHIK)

OH.

GORO

GORO (RUMBLE)

NOW THERE'S A RARE FACE.

IT'S BEEN TOO LONG, MR. KIEMAN.

NOT MY FAVORITE PERSON ...

I'M FILLING IN HERE FOR HOUSE CHIEF JEEDA TODAY.

...AS I RECALL, WEREN'T YOU THE MASTER OF THE DELTA BRANCH?

IT HAS INDEED BEEN QUITE A WHILE, KRAFT LAWRENCE.

THIS IS YOUR SECOND TIME IN KERUBE, ISN'T IT.

KACHA (CHIK)

NOW, MR. LAWRENCE, IF I REMEMBER RIGHT...

NO, BY SHIP— THOUGH IT WAS VIA THE RIVER AND NOT THE SEA.

YOU'VE ARRIVED THIS TIME BY LAND, I TAKE IT?

CHAKI (CHIK)

AH, I SEE.

I'M NOT ON MY USUAL ROUTE. THERE WAS SOME TROUBLE IN LENOS.

JUST AN OLD HABIT FROM CHILD-HOOD.

110タン

PATAN (SHUT)

STILL, IT'S IMPRESSIVE— I SEE THE RUMORS THAT YOU'VE MEMORIZED THE TRADE ROUTES OF EVERY GUILD MEMBER ARE TRUE.

SO, MR. KIEMAN, REGARDING THE GEOGRAPHY OF THE NORTH-LANDS...

DO YOU HAPPEN TO HAVE ANY KNOWLEDGE? OLD MAPS WOULD BE ESPECIALLY HELPFUL.

ZLII (CLOSE)

HUH?

...I DO HAVE SOME CLUES, BUT...

YOU MAY NOT KNOW THIS, MR. LAWRENCE...

...BUT AT THE MOMENT, I CANNOT HELP BUT BE VERY NERVOUS ABOUT WHO IS MEETING WITH WHICH TRADING COMPANIES IN THIS TOWN.

...THEN, A LETTER OF INTRODUCTION TO THE JEAN COMPANY...

...THE GUILD DOES NOT MUCH CARE TO SHARE THEM.

!

...IS OUT OF THE QUESTION.

.....

MAY THE BLESSINGS OF SAINT LAMBARDOS BE UPON YOU.

IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME.

ASSISTANT HOUSE CHIEF, CAN YOU COME FOR A MOMENT?

THAT'S GOOD.

I FELT LIKE I WOULD DIE AT FIRST, BUT TO THINK I'D FEEL THIS MUCH BETTER ONLY HALF A DAY LATER!

MY THANKS TO YOU, COL.

N-NOT AT ALL.

SHALL WE GO EAT?

ガチャ

GACHA. (KACHOK)

SO HOW DID IT GO?

WA

WA (YELL)

GAYA

GAYA (CHATTER)

YOUR HOMELAND MAY BE IN DANGER. YOU HARDLY NEED TO BE CONSIDERATE OF ME.

NOT THAT I'M TRYING TO HURRY YOU.

WE ONLY JUST DECIDED TO RELAX, AFTER ALL.

AND LATELY THEY'VE BEEN GETTING WORSE.

HERE IN KERUBE, THE NORTH AND SOUTH SIDES AREN'T ON THE BEST OF TERMS.

STILL, AS WE GUESSED, IT SEEMS THINGS ARE QUITE TROUBLE-SOME HERE AT THE MOMENT.

HEY!

AND THE AMOUNT OF MONEY THAT PASSES THROUGH THE MARKETPLACE IS ALSO MASSIVE, SO THERE'S PLENTY OF FUEL FOR DISAGREE-MENT.

NATURALLY, THE CON-STRUCTION COST A MASSIVE AMOUNT OF MONEY.

THE DELTA MARKETPLACE WAS BUILT BY SINKING PILLARS INTO THE SAND, THEN BUILDING ATOP THEM.

MM...

I'VE BEEN TO THE SOUTH SIDE, ONCE...

KYORO GLANCE

キョロ

キョロ

KYORO

COMPARED WITH THE NORTH, THE BUILDINGS ARE MUCH GRANDER.

B- BUT THE PEOPLE ON THIS SIDE ARE KINDER.

AND THE ROWEN TRADE GUILD, BEING CONNECTED TO COMMERCE ON THE SOUTH SIDE...

...DOESN'T WANT THEM TO DO ANYTHING UNNEC-ESSARY.

ANYWAY, THE JEAN COMPANY SEEMS TO HAVE SOME CONNECTIONS WITH IMPORTANT PEOPLE ON THE NORTH SIDE.

THE HARSHER THE PLACE, THE KINDER THE PEOPLE.

GASHI (RUB)

GASHI

YES.

PEOPLE IN THE SOUTH... ARE ALWAYS CHEERFUL.

UM...

GU! (GULP)

AH WELL, EVEN IF THE GUILD'S NO HELP, I'LL WORK SOMETHING OUT ON MY OWN.

WASHI (RUFFLE)

WASHI

THAT'S BECAUSE IT'S EASIER TO MAKE LIQUOR IN WARM PLACES.

TRYING TO BE CONSIDERATE, EH?

OH, I SEE.

WOMAN?

I'M WORRIED ABOUT YOUR WINE-LOOSENED TONGUE BLABBING TO THE WOMAN STAYING ON OUR FLOOR.

I THINK YOU'D BEST GO EASY ON THE WINE.

LOOK WHO'S TALKING.

SHE HAD A WOMAN'S FOOT-STEPS.

MY NOSE WAS WORTHLESS THANKS TO THE SALVE, BUT MY EARS WERE STILL WELL.

I PASSED SOMEONE THIS MORNING, BUT...THAT WAS A WOMAN?

KUH FU FU

I SEE NOW I'VE NO NEED TO WORRY ABOUT YOU AT ALL!

BUT YOU REALLY DIDN'T NOTICE?

NNN.

KUUU

KUUU (SNORE)

THE ROAD NORTH?

I DON'T KNOW THE ROADS PAST NYOHHIRA.

I'M SEARCHING FOR A PLACE CALLED YOITSU.

HMM

HEADING ALL THE WAY INTO PAGAN LANDS, THEN...

THEN WHY EARN MONEY AT ALL?

THOUGH UPON DEATH WE MUST CAST THOSE PURSES ASIDE.

BUT THAT'S WHAT MER-CHANTS DO.

WE'LL GO ANYWHERE TO FILL OUR COIN PURSES.

BECAUSE MONEY IS UNSIGHTLY BEFORE THE GODS.

BUT YOU DON'T PUT THAT SAME QUESTION TO SOMEONE WHO'S CLEANING A ROOM.

IF YOU'RE JUST GOING TO THROW IT AWAY...

THERE WAS A MERCHANT LONG AGO WHO ONCE PRESENTED THE GODS WITH SUCH IRONY.

HMPH

.....

NO, I PLAN TO GATHER SOME INFORMATION FIRST.

WILL YOU DEPART SOON? AS I RECALL, YOUR DEPOSIT WAS RATHER A LARGE ONE.

AH, WELL.

AFTER THAT, YOU'D NEED TO CHANGE TO A LONG-COATED BREED AND SLEIGH.

SNOW WILL BE LIGHT THIS YEAR, SO YOU COULD GET PARTWAY WITH A NORMAL HORSE.

BUT IF YOU'RE GOING NORTH, SOONER IS BETTER.

INDEED...

WHAT IS THIS PERSON'S NAME?

ITS OWNER IS FROM THE NORTH.

I NOTICED YOU HAD ONE IN YOUR STABLES.

HE'S BEEN STAYING HERE QUITE SOME TIME, BUT I'VE NEVER ASKED HIS NAME.

HE'S FATTER EVERY YEAR TOO— IT'S QUITE CLEAR IN MY MIND. STRANGE...

...OH, MY.

OH!

HE DOESN'T KEEP A GUEST LOG?

I SUPPOSE THESE THINGS HAPPEN...

QUITE.

THOUGH IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR INFORMATION ABOUT ROADS IN THE NORTH, IT MAY TAKE UNTIL SPRING.

HE'S A FUR MERCHANT FROM THE NORTH. NEXT TIME I SEE HIM, I'LL MENTION YOU.

MY THANKS.

DO YOU MEAN THE TROUBLE AROUND THE DELTA COULD AFFECT THINGS?

I IMAGINE IT'S IN OUR NATURE TO RESIST THOSE CURRENTS.

SO NATURALLY THOSE CURRENTS AFFECT THE TOWNS WHERE PEOPLE GATHER.

PEOPLE'S LIVES HAVE CURRENTS.

THIS IS YOUR THIRD TIME AT THE INN, YES? WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

IT'S BEEN PLEASANT TALKING WITH YOU.

HEH-HEH. IT'S HARD TO ARGUE WITH THAT.

JUST LIKE HOW WE SEEK FORGIVENESS AFTER MAKING A MISTAKE.

I'M AROLD ECKLUND.

KRAFT LAWRENCE.

YOU DIDN'T ASK ME UNTIL MY FIFTH VISIT.

THAT'S MORE THAN ENOUGH.

IN THE OLD DAYS, I'D MAKE YOU SOME FINE LEATHER STRAPWORK, BUT THESE DAYS ALL I CAN OFFER IS A QUIET NIGHT.

YOU ASK HIM HIS NAME SO SOON, MR. AROLD?

THAT'S BECAUSE I DIDN'T SPEAK WITH YOU UNTIL THE FIFTH VISIT.

ARE YOU AS SOCIABLE AS I AM, THEN?

PERHAPS.

AND IT'S SO RARE THAT YOU OPEN THAT MOUTH OF YOURS.

WE SHOULD TALK. YOU WANTED TO HEAR OF THE JEAN COMPANY, YES?

...INDEED.

YOU, THERE.

YES?

MM

I'LL TAKE THIS.

SHALL WE GO UPSTAIRS?

PWAH!

THIS WINE IS TOO GOOD TO WASTE BY DRINKING IT WARM.

HAH, I KNEW IT.

YOU SEEM LIKE YOU'VE GOT YOUR GUARD WELL UP.

ニヤ NIYA (GRIN)

GUBI (GLUG)

I'M A TRAVELING MERCHANT WHO DOES A LOT OF BUSINESS WITH PEOPLE I'LL NEVER SEE AGAIN.

...I MUST CONFESS...

...THOUGH ...

IF ONE CALLS ME OVER, I CAN'T HELP BUT BE ON MY GUARD A BIT.

...FEMALE MERCHANTS ARE RARE.

ONE SHOULDN'T UNDERESTIMATE A WOMAN'S INTUITION. THOUGH I SUPPOSE I'M NOT ONE TO TALK.

GUI (TUG)

グイ

IT'S BEEN YEARS SINCE ANYONE FIGURED THAT OUT.

MY COMPANION POSSESSES NIGH ANIMAL INSTINCT, YOU SEE.

SO IT'S COME TO THAT...

FU FU

フフ

...

シュル

SHURU

!

シュル

SHURU (SHFF)

I LEARN THAT LESSON EVERY DAY.

NAME'S FLEUR BOLAN.

"FLEUR" ISN'T MUCH BY WAY OF INTIMIDATION, YOU SEE.

KRAFT LAWRENCE.

BUT IN BUSINESS, I GO BY EVE BOLAN.

To be Continued...

Special Thanks!!
MR. OKAMOTO ITTOUHEI, MR. TENTSU TOI, MR. YAKKUN, MR. N-TA, MR. YUU, MR. A.

Congratulations on Volume 8! The world of Koume-sensei's art is so vivid, I felt like I could smell the dust! Can't wait to see what happens next!

支倉凍砂

Isuna Hasekura

SPICE & WOLF

Congratulations on the release of Volume 8! Now we're into episodes that weren't in the anime, so being able to read Koume-sensei's version is simply too rewarding to properly express. I just hope he lets Elsa be happy...

Jyuu Ayakura

SPICE & WOLF 8

Isuna Hasekura
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This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is coincidental.

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